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BENJAMIN RUSH M.D. L.L.D.

Portland, Maine

Portland Magazine, v. 3, 1897

Facing p. 105

*Staughton, W.*  
*Benjamin please lunch plate in front*

AN

# EULOGIUM

IN MEMORY

OF THE LATE

*Pox*

## DR. BENJAMIN RUSH,

Professor of the Institutes and Practice of Medicine and of Clinical Practice in the  
University of Pennsylvania.

DELIVERED AND PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE GRADUATES  
AND STUDENTS OF MEDICINE IN SAID UNIVERSITY,

In the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, on Thursday,  
the 8th of July, 1813,

BY WILLIAM STAUGHTON, D. D.

*252 950*

PHILADELPHIA.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE GRADUATES.

1813.

TO THE REV. DR. STAUGHTON.

SIR,

PERMIT us in the name of the late Graduates and Students of the University of Pennsylvania, to tender our grateful thanks to you, for your appropriate, learned and eloquent Eulogium, to the revered memory of our late Professor Dr. Benjamin Rush, and to request a copy for publication.

JOHN CROGHAN,  
JOHN S. HARDAWAY,  
EDWARD BRUX,  
N. NANCREDE,  
JOHN F. WATERHOUSE,

} Committee of Arrangement.

Philadelphia, July 8th, 1813.



## EULOGIUM, &c.

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I RISE, at the request of the graduates and students in medicine, of the University of Pennsylvania, to offer a tribute, defective I fear, but sincere and respectful, to the talents and character of the late Professor Rush.

It has been no inconsiderable part of the wisdom of nations, by grateful monuments to honour the memory of men who have promoted the public good. The harps of minstrels, the chisel of the statuary, the pencil of the artist, the bold designs of the architect, the votes of senates and the eloquence of orators have been charged with the sacred service. Eulogy has doubtless in some nations and instances swelled itself into extravagance and crime. Divine honours were never the desert of mortals, and to them were never tendered, without an insult on the perfections of the infinite Creator. And yet, statesmen and generals, philosophers and physicians have been deified; not simply in the licentious effusions of the poet, but by the erection of temples and altars, the imposition of victims, and the offering of prayers. With this folly Socrates himself is chargeable, who, a little before his dissolution, enjoined Crito to exonerate him of a vow, by offering a cock to Æsculapius. Egypt was the

mother, and Greece and Rome the adopters of this irreverence to the Supreme.

The encomiast has, moreover, sometimes so degraded himself and his office, as to have ascribed high virtues, and presented garlands of renown to men whose career has been the curse, and whose decease the relief of mankind. Infamy itself has sometimes audaciously bound on its forehead, the frontlet of honour. "Had we no other historians of the Roman emperors," says Mr. Addison, "but those we find on their money, we should take them for the most virtuous race of princes mankind were ever blessed with; whereas, if we look into their lives, they appear, many of them, such monsters of lust and cruelty, as are almost a reproach to human nature. Tiberius, on his coins, is all mercy and moderation; Caligula and Nero, are fathers of their country; Galba, the patron of public liberty, and Vitellius, the restorer of the city of Rome. In short, if you have a mind to see the religious Commodus, the pious Caracalla, and the devout Heliogabalus, you may find them in the inscription or device of their medals."

The abuse of panegyric offers no argument against its propriety and usefulness. Encomiums may be pronounced without derogating from the glory of Jehovah. Counterfeit circulation only enhances the value of genuine coin, as does a mischievous empiricism the worth of medical science. Under the inspiration of his God, David delivered his eulogium on the death of Jonathan and Saul. He describes them as "swifter than eagles and stronger than lions." Who can be

insensible to the generosity and delicacy of his heart, when he exclaims, “Ye daughters of Israel, weep  
“over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet with other de-  
“lights. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of  
“the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high  
“places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jona-  
“than: very pleasant hast thou been to me!”

The frequent acquaintance, as he drops the guiltless tear on the grave of the amiable RUSH, shall involuntarily cry, “*very pleasant hast thou been to me.*”

Many of the fathers of the christian church by their example, sanction attempts to display and immortalize virtuous character. The funeral orations of Eusebius on Constantine, of Nazianzen on Basil and Cæsarius, and those of Ambrose on Valentinian and Theodosius, with others of a similar nature, the world possesses.

“Great men,” says Rollin, “are the property of a  
“republic.” Admit they are such—a republic has a debt of gratitude to discharge. The pleasures of a good conscience, and the approbation of God, are paramount to all other retribution; yet the citizen, whose life is consecrated to the good of a community, deduces an inexpressible pleasure from the hope that his memory after death will be grateful to those whom while living he laboriously served. When the magistrates of Lampasum, the place of the residence of Anaximander, inquired in what way they should honour his name, his wish, alike modest and sentimental, was that the boys might have leave to play on the anniversary of his decease. The mind that is dead to the veneration of posterity, scarce ever deserves it. Eulogy, the meed of merit, is soothing to the grief of

surviving relatives, it calls into action the most manly affections of the heart, it gives tone and fire to youthful ardour, and makes us, in spite of conscious incapacity and indolence, aspire to become the sublime we draw. Suspect me not of the temerity of attempting the full length portrait of Dr. Rush. I offer only a few outlines, and give shadow but to an eye or a hand. The thought consoles me, that for near half a century Philadelphia has been contemplating the fair original.

It was the predicted and is the unequalled privilege of the Jew, to be able to trace back his peculiar lineage for more than three thousand years. Excepting in the idle genealogy of nobles and sovereigns, men for the most part having recognized a second or third degree of descent, totally lose sight of ancestry until they arrive at Adam, the progenitor of us all. More remotely than is usual, we are happy in being able to discover the parentage of Dr. Benjamin Rush. His ancestor, who first came to America, was Captain John Rush. He landed in Pennsylvania in 1683, and settled at Byberry, thirteen miles from Philadelphia. It may gratify curiosity to learn, that he was an inflexible republican. He was personally known to Oliver Cromwell, and in his army, with distinguished reputation, commanded a troop of horse. One day, seeing his mare come into the camp without him, Cromwell supposed he had been killed, and lamented him, by saying, "he has not left a better officer behind him." His sword, his watch and his bible are in possession of the family. He died at his plantation, in 1699. His age was about 80. He was the parent of ten children. Him-

self and family became members of the Baptist society. Elizabeth his eldest daughter arrived with her husband in Pennsylvania, in 1682, having crossed the ocean in the same ship with the celebrated William Penn. They settled in Byberry, on five hundred acres of land. William, the Captain's eldest son, died in Byberry in 1688, five years after his arrival in America. James, the senior son of William, was "an ingenious, active, worthy man, and so exact in business, that when he died, (which was in the year 1727,) he did not leave a single debt behind him." He was buried in his family grave-yard, near his house. On his head-stone, the artless but impressive lines are still legible,

I've try'd the strength of death at length,  
And here lie under ground;  
But I shall rise above the skies,  
When the last trump shall sound.

John Rush, the honoured father of our deceased friend, was the oldest son of James. He was a man of a meek and peaceable spirit, and so just in his intercourse with the world, that it was said of him by a neighbour, "more could not be uttered in favour of a man's integrity than that he was as honest as John Rush." He died July 26, 1751, in this city, and lies buried in Christ church grave-yard. "Let me be buried by his side, (said his amiable widow on her death-bed,) he was an angel to me while he lived."

And such to *thee*, thou faithful relict of the dead! thou daughter of grief! was *THY* Rush. May the



God of angels sustain thee, and the recollection be cherished, that "smitten friends" continue angels still.

The 24th of December, 1745, old style, was the birth-day of the deceased Professor. He was born on a handsome farm of one hundred acres, lying on Poques-tion Creek, in Byberry. The anxious care of his excellent father introduced him at an early period into the school of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Finley, in Maryland, on the border of Pennsylvania: a gentleman whose talents were eminent, and whose death was a delightful scene of Christian exultation; a scene which, by a master's hand, Dr. Mason has contrasted with the frivolous exit of Mr. Hume. Within these walls his remains are sleeping, in hope of a joyful resurrection. With the history of young Rush, during his early pupilage, our acquaintance is inconsiderable. We know not if "*foremost*" 'twas his joy

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to cleave  
With pliant arms the glassy wave,  
To chase the rolling circle's speed  
Or urge the flying ball!

Under the tuition of Dr. Finley he continued, until in the year 1759, he entered Nassau Hall, at Princeton. Yes! Nassau Hall, thou alma mater of many of the most distinguished civilians and patriots, physicians and divines, over whom America has rejoiced—*Rush was thy son!* The institution was at this time under the care of the pious and eloquent President Davies. The powers of the pupil began now to frondesce and blossom. Goldsmith used to say he never was particularly attached to the belles lettres till thirty. The

taste of Rush was charmed and his judgment ripened by the beauty and splendours of fine writing at fifteen. He attempted composition, and was astonished to find his efforts succeeded with the universal gratulations of those whom it was an honour to please. At such success, to use the words of Dr. Young, the juvenile composer usually "starts as at a meteor in the night; he is much surprized, he can scarcely believe it true. During this happy confusion, it may be said to him as to Eve at the lake,

"What there thou seest, fair creature, is *thyself*!"

His approving preceptor, a model of oratory, found occasion often to say in substance as did Erasmus of Melanchton, "What hopes may we not entertain of one, who though as yet very young and almost a boy, is equally to be admired for his knowledge of both languages? what quickness of invention! what purity of diction! what powers of memory! what variety of reading—what modesty and gracefulness of behaviour." We look with interest on the rill whose continuous current promises to exhibit a Delaware or an Amazon.

On his beginning to discover some talent for public speaking, his friends recommended, and his heart began to approve, the study of the law. The dissuasions of Dr. Finley were successful in diverting him from the project of legal enterprise to medical pursuits. To serve with reputation, his country, at the bar, and on the bench, was reserved for the Hon. Jacob Rush, his younger brother. In the fall of 1760 he received the degree of batchelor in the arts, and

commenced the study of medicine under the direction of the late Dr. John Redman, of this city. So intense was his application, that during the six years which he spent in the family of his beloved instructor, he was absent only two days from his business. *Juvat ipse labor*: toil itself was pleasure. In the August of 1766, he left his natal shores, and visited Great Britain, with the view of completing his medical course. Two years afterwards, in the university of Edinburgh, a school of medicine, which in Europe has long been without a rival, Dr. Robertson, the historian, Dr. Cullen, Dr. Gregory, and Dr. Black, presented him his medical diploma. The subject of his thesis was the *Digestion of Foods*. While yet a student at Edinburgh, the American society for promoting useful knowledge, evinced its sagacity in the detection of forming talent by electing him a member.

Edinburgh tendered him the freedom of the city, and he was chosen an associate of its revolution club.

He passed the winter, succeeding his graduation, in London. His mind was now like the fertile vernal glebe, delicately sensible to every zephyr and every ray, and disposed to repay, with its own increase, the influence it enjoyed. The following spring he visited Paris, and from thence, in the summer, recrossed the Atlantic, to consecrate the first fruits of his acquisitions and talents to the service of his native country. His country was not slow in appreciating his merits. He fixed on Philadelphia as his residence. His practice, as is common with young adventurers in medicine, was, for a short time, at first laborious and almost without compensation. But the encouragement of-



ferred him by an eminent divine of this city, he soon realized, "Be thou faithful over a few things, and I will make thee ruler over many." He was soon called into the abodes of wealth and character, and enrolled for life physician of themselves and their offspring. He ascended the chair of Professor of Chemistry in the college of Philadelphia, by the unanimous vote of its curators as early as the month of August, 1769. His name rose like the sun, and soon began to be pronounced with respect in every circle of science and medicine in the colonies of America and in Europe. In 1772 he was elected member of the London society for the encouragement of arts and manufactures. He solicited, and in the year 1776, a year by America never to be forgotten, received the hand of Miss Julia Stockton, of Princeton, New Jersey; a lady every way suited to be the wife of a Rush. Her tenderness, her wisdom, her prudence, her piety ministered solace to his sorrows, information to his counsels, dignity to domestic arrangement, and ardour to his devotions. In 1777, he received the appointment of physician general of the American army, which office the ensuing year he resigned. He succeeded Dr. Morgan in the chair of the theory and practice of physic in the college of Philadelphia, in the year 1789. On the consolidation of this institution with the university, four years after, he occupied the chair of professor of the institutes of medicine and clinical practice, and only at the call of death resigned it.

Yes, death has called, and Rush has obeyed the mandate. For the circumstances of his dissolution, the

public are indebted to the enlightened detail of Dr. Dorsey. "During the last year or two of his life, a cough, which he familiarly called his *tussis senilis*, increased very considerably. Having in early life, suffered severely from some pulmonary symptoms, which were thought to wear a consumptive aspect, he never believed that he should live to be old. After visiting his patients as usual, on Wednesday, the 14th of April, after tea, in the evening, he was attacked with a violent chill, which was relieved by some brandy and water. In the night he awoke with a very severe pain in the side, attended with great difficulty in breathing. He sent for a bleeder, and ordered him to take eight or ten ounces of blood from his arm. After losing the blood he was relieved and slept. A medical friend was requested to visit him the next morning; finding him weak and exhausted, he administered some wine-whey, which was evidently beneficial. His pulse, however, became gradually weaker, and his symptoms soon assumed the prevailing typhus diathesis. Stimulating remedies were administered by his physicians to as great an extent as the stomach would bear, and external irritation kept up, but without effect. About five o'clock in the afternoon of the 19th of April, perfectly rational, and expecting with the utmost composure his approaching dissolution, he expired." His age sixty-eight years and three months. The bells, with muffled tongue, tolled not the tidings of his death. He had forbidden them. He had seen in his practice ill effects result to his patients from the intelligence they have conveyed,

and wished as to himself, that testimonies of personal respect should be sacrificed to public good. Our friend is gone. No more shall we hear his luminous and oracular instructions, in the parlour circle, or from the Professor's chair. The eye of intelligence has lost its brightness. The furrowed cheek offers its channels no longer to the tears of sympathy. The whitened locks engage our reverence no more. Death has changed the countenance, and the meek light of wisdom it exhibited has vanished. A minister of health, no more shall we see him rolling through our streets in his plain vehicle, the faithful African at his side. No more shall he dispel the gloom from the chambers of disease, hear the blessings of convalescents, or alleviate the struggles of expiring life. His loved habitation, the temples of devotion, welcome his footsteps no more.

He has lived for his country, and in a special degree, citizens of Philadelphia, he has lived for *you*. The consciousness of your loss and your gratitude for his toils, you have evinced by that general sadness which overspread the city, when report announced *Dr. Rush is dead*. From crowded windows and streets as to the church yard his remains were borne, the countenances of thousands had, in common with those of the long procession of divines, physicians, philosophers, merchants and tradesmen, but *ONE expression*. To have given utterance to the universal feeling, you need only have exclaimed, *our father, our friend is no more!*\*

\* I am happy in being able to state, that he has left his own life in writing, which I trust before long the public will possess;

Permit me the pleasure of placing before you, in different lights, the character of this distinguished man. View him as a scholar, a philosopher, a patriot, a physician, a christian.

The attainments of Rush, while a student, were highly respectable. His facility in acquiring languages was great. With the Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Spanish, he was familiar. His quotations from the Roman classics, with which his conversation in the company of the learned was embellished, were apt and beautiful: offered with an easy grace and timely propriety, they were "apples of gold in pictures of silver." His favourite author was Tacitus. A volume of his works he usually carried with him, and improved by reading him the leisure that the interval of a few minutes before he could enter the room of a patient would offer. Of the writings of this "elegant and enlightened" author, as he denominates him, he has made frequent use, particularly in his "account of the German inhabitants of Pennsylvania." It has been objected against the deceased professor, that he was unfriendly to the acquirement of learned languages. He certainly, like Pasor, considered some of the ancient classics as "unfavourable to morals and religion." He objected to their being studied "too early in life," and could not persuade himself that they were a "necessary branch of liberal education." But he did not contend for the extinction of a critical intimacy with the elegancies of Athenian and Roman literature. "Let them," he says, "like travelling, become a part of the luxury of education." He has met the arguments usually adduced in favour of the dead languages,

arising from their importance to a critical acquaintance with our own, from the fine models of eloquence and taste which they supply, from the consent of European nations in making them the vehicle of their discoveries, and from their importance in the learned professions. If he has not obviated the force of these arguments, he has at least discussed them with ingenuity and candour. He seems to have contemplated classic learning in the same light as did Horace a cluster of elegant ideas. The grove, the altar of Diana, the meandering of a current hurrying through the fields, the river Rhine and the rainbow are beautiful, but in the introduction to the poem, *non erat his locus*, there was no room for these. Other branches of education more profitable to the pursuits of mechanism and merchandize, must inevitably be neglected where early years are consumed in the study of Latin and Greek. He considered human life too short, and the field of medicine particularly, too extensive, to waste a long period in attaining what could never be applied to practical purposes. I offer these remarks with the design of stating distinctly Dr. Rush's views. I profess not to vindicate them: this he has done himself, and by all who perceive their force, they will be adopted. Perhaps Dr. Rush, in asserting that a sufficiency of classic learning by a common capacity, may be acquired in a year or two, as much undervalues the worth of this species of literature, as Dr. Samuel Johnson and such as have adopted his views, have erred in representing it as inseparable from mental eminence. He considered himself as writing for the profit of the youth of a



young but growing republic. His aims were like his patriotism, pure; and like his heart, benevolent.

His acquaintance with the sciences was general. If into some his leisure and inclination had prevented his wading deeper than to collect the pebble and the shell, from the profound of others he brought up and exhibited the pearl and the gem. His progress in universal knowledge was assisted greatly by his powers of retention. What he had once inscribed on the tablet of his memory was rarely effaced. It was one of the aphorisms of Lord Bacon, "reading makes a full man, writing a correct man, and speaking a ready man." Dr. Rush was always full, correct, and ready. His reading was extensive. He marked down every idea that had any claim to originality, beauty, energy, or usefulness. Few men ever collected from books and life, so large a body of literary and medicinal anecdotes and facts as himself. His memoranda are a rich museum. His penetration could detect the gold in its ore, and discover mines where thousands saw only desert. Sometimes he had recourse to what the rhetoricians call topical memory, and his recollection would receive aid from a knot, or the fixing the eye for a few moments on some object occurring frequently to his senses: but the vigorous interest he felt in all his engagements, and his correct arrangement of ideas in his mind, rendered such auxiliaries not frequently necessary.

The mind of Professor Rush was characterized by a manly independence. In science, religion, and medicine, he was an eclectic. His intellect was a Columbus, mistaking sometimes the nature and extent of

discovery, but delighting in voyage, calm, persevering and successful. Longinus represents liberty as the nurse of genius: genius does honour to its foster-mother. With greater emphasis than Watts might Rush have exclaimed:

Custom that tyranness of fools,  
That leads the learned round the schools  
In magic chains of forms and rules,  
My genius storms her throne.  
No more, ye slaves, with awe profound,  
Beat the dull track nor dance the round,  
Loose hands and quit the enchanted ground,  
Knowledge invites us each alone.

The science of anatomy received no light from Egyptian embalmers. More action, without observation and inference, profits mankind but little. The mind of the deceased was inquisitive and observant. It delighted to educe theory from practice, as well as to combine practice with theory.

We have stated that Dr. Rush was elected, while yet a pupil at Edinburgh, a member of the American Society for promoting useful knowledge. In June 1769, this society and the American Philosophical Society effected a junction, under the name of the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for the promotion of useful knowledge. Of this institution he was chosen in 1770, a curator, and repeatedly held the vice-presidency. He regretted the suspension of the meetings of the society by the revolutionary war; before and after which he was an active member. In February, 1786, he pronounced before the society an ingenious oration, entitled "an

"enquiry into the influence of physical causes upon  
 "the moral faculty." He observes in the preface, that  
 if the facts and principles contained in the oration  
 "have the same operation upon the mind of the reader  
 "that they had upon the mind of the author, they will  
 "at first be doubted, afterwards believed, and finally  
 "they will be propagated." In the first Presbyterian  
 church in this city, in December, 1796, he delivered  
 an eulogium agreeably to appointment, intended to  
 perpetuate the memory of the late president of the  
 society, Dr. Rittenhouse. The society by its resolu-  
 tion, declared it "eloquent, learned, comprehensive  
 and just." One passage from the eulogium I cannot  
 deny myself the pleasure of quoting. "As a com-  
 "panion," Dr. Rittenhouse "instructed upon all sub-  
 "jects. To his happy communicative disposition, I  
 "beg leave to express my obligations in this public  
 "manner. I can truly say after an acquaintance with  
 "him for six and twenty years, that I never went into  
 "his company without learning something." My  
 acquaintance with Professor Rush has existed but  
 about seventeen years, but certainly I was never in his  
 company without learning something. I have heard  
 of several in our city who have known him forty or  
 fifty years, who have made a like observation. A mind  
 calm and contented is a perpetual feast to itself, but  
 how vast must the resources be of such minds as can  
 supply a continual intellectual feast to others. In con-  
 versation, whether familiar or philosophic, few were  
 his equals. His anecdotes were always happy, and his  
 allusions and analogies delicate and striking. No man  
 could succeed in placing a thought in the most con-



vincing and engaging light better than he. His fancy was excursive, but his judgment sedate. One nation in Europe is famed for invention, another for the application of discoveries to useful purposes. The mind of Rush was conspicuous for both.

The tumult of political life ill agrees with the silent pursuits of science. But Dr. Rush was a patriot, a decided whig. When he saw the interests of his beloved country endangered, he sprung into the lines of the foremost to assert her rights. His early exertions, his bold conceptions, the nervous effusions of his pen, and the mild intelligence of his counsels assisted in lifting the colonies of America into free and independent states. He sat in congress in the year 1776, and has enrolled his name on the sacred charter of American liberty. He was elected member of the state convention for the adoption of the federal constitution. Under his parent state he never held any office; and under the general government was only treasurer of the mint. The cause of freedom, and the universal happiness of man, were dear to his inmost heart. He exulted for joy as he beheld their approach, as exults the Siberian on his loftiest mountain when after months of darkness he first views the returning sun. America shared his best affections, but he felt himself like Cato born for the human race.

The niche in the temple of society which Professor Rush was peculiarly destined to fill, was that of a physician. Of this he was convinced, and to the science of medicine he directed the forces of his mind. Other studies were his visits, this was his home. His arm, like that of *Æsculapius* on his coins, was bared for

medical exertion. His practice was large, and his labours Herculean; but notwithstanding his natural constitution was feeble, and required perpetual vigilance to preserve its tone, he so systematized his engagements, as that by giving to each its hour, he could fulfil the claims of all. His confidence in medical remedies was strong. He would seldom despair of cure or relief, until death tore the patient from his superintendence. The very idea of incurable diseases was abhorrent from his judgment and feelings. He was of opinion, that for every disease the God of mercy had provided a remedy, and that its non-discovery argued only the imperfection of the healing art. He anticipated a millennial day in which sickness would yield to temperance and medicine, as certainly as the shades of night to the radiance of morn. Such benevolent sentiments were not the illusions of eccentricity. He believed he was justified in his hopes by the progress of medical knowledge, but his confidence and zeal were animated and sustained, like the heart of Alexander, at Jerusalem, by the page of sacred prophecy.

“ Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true  
 “ Scenes of accomplish’d bliss! which who can see  
 “ Though but in distant prospect, and not feel  
 “ His soul refresh’d with foretaste of the joy.  
 “ The creeping pestilence is driv’n away,  
 “ The breath of heav’n has chas’d it. In the heart  
 “ No passion touches a discordant string,  
 “ But all is harmony and love. Disease  
 “ Is not: the pure and uncontaminate blood  
 “ Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.”

COWPER.

In the chamber of sickness, the ease and elegance of Dr. Rush's manners always created respect, while his unaffected sympathy constrained age to love him as a brother, and youth to rejoice in him as a parent. He had always at hand some soothing observation derived from his art as a physician, or his piety as a saint, to cheer the bosom of his patient. The sufferer almost forgot his pains, not with the horror which removes tooth-ache in the presence of a dentist, but with the pleasure which music supplies while it charms away the tarantula's bite. He marked the origin and progress of the diseases peculiar to his country, with the eye of an eagle and with the reflection of a sage. The pestilence, a visitation which the page of inspiration sublimely denominates "*death*," with "*hell*," or the grave in its retinue, he endeavoured to follow through its dismal meanders, and has pointed you to the ministers of heaven—the sky, the miasm, the neglected dock, or unventilated ship that produced it. When Philadelphia was stormed by this dread invader, he was not merely a centinel at his post, but a general in his ranks. He lost sight of his personal exposure in his solicitude for the recovery of his suffering fellow citizens. His deliberate passion for the public good, no derision of his remedies, no misrepresentation of his principles could exterminate or diminish. He felt and acted to the wide extent of his capacity, as a disciple of that Son of man who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

In the chair of the Professor he appeared with peculiar advantage. His lectures exhibited a system of medicine that illumined the understanding of his

pupils, and will secure the investigation, perhaps the universal applause, of posterity. He decried nosology only because persuaded of its mischiefs. He recommended system and theory in medicine because he conceived its first principles as really ascertained, as are those of attraction and gravitation, the grand discovery of Newton, in the natural world; and because he saw the practice his theory suggested, expeditiously and safely lessen the afflictions of depressed humanity. It would ill become me, and certainly prove unavailing, to state my ideas of the system he taught. The world, and especially his country, have become familiar with the terms he employs. He has thrown open the volume of his ideas, and cheerfully left them to the perusal of Time, who "overthrows the illusions of opinion, but establishes the decisions of nature."

We have seen that in his juvenile exercises the deceased discovered an attachment to oratory and belles lettres. This talent, ripened, peculiarly fitted him to become a public lecturer. He was greatly charmed with the eloquence of Whitfield, and has been thought, notwithstanding the compass of his voice was more limited, to have acquired, I suspect involuntarily, something of his emphasis and melodious tone. He always felt an interest in the sentiments he delivered. He was master of the stroke that could grave truth on the memory, or throw into vibration all the strings of the heart. His last course of lectures are supposed, by his class, to have been equal in animation and effect with any he ever delivered.

I can never forget the close of his lectures in the spring of 1812. I quote merely from memory: "And

“now gentlemen,” said he, “I bid you farewell. For the first time this season I have met you with reluctance. Accept of my thanks for your respectful and orderly attention to the doctrines I have taught you. Happy should I have been to have invited you frequently through the winter to my family. I have no doubt I should have been edified and pleased with your company: but domestic affliction has prevented me.” He would have gone on, but his countenance suddenly reddened, and the big tears fell from his eyes. The class recollected the trying circumstances of a beloved son. Again he attempted to read—he could not. His aged hand raised insensibly with grief, fell heavy on the desk—he bowed to retire. Some of the class attempted to express their feelings by clapping, but they were not able. The emotion was not to be uttered. Every youthful eye seemed to say, venerable father, *God Almighty be thy supporter!*

A more powerful touch of natural, unpremeditated, and penetrating eloquence I never witnessed.—

Let it be remembered that Professor Rush owed none of his eminence to the diminutiveness of the talents of his associates. He was great in the midst of greatness. In the medical department of an university, where anatomy is made familiar by the promptness of nomenclature, the accuracy of demonstration and the charms of physiology—where in surgery the lectures exhibit an informing simplicity, and the knife attempts with success every thing but miracle—where the materia medica, botany, and natural history are presented with the attractions which reading and judg-



ment, genius and eloquence supply—where chemistry and the remaining parts of a medical education are taught with correctness, respectability and effect—Dr. Rush maintained his elevation. Like a primal fixed star, amid the host of heaven, he shone with a lustre wholly his own.

It is remarked by Bishop Newton that “all persons of any note and eminence bear a double character in the world.” This is true in relation to men distinguished in medicine. Fable itself intimates the thought. Medea was reported to have boiled men alive, because she first recommended warm bathing. The success of *Æsculapius* in healing disease, is described as a crime sufficient to have incurred the indignation of the gods. But dismissing fable, *Herophilus*, who first practiced the anatomical knife, is called by *Tertullian* “*medicus aut lanius*.” *Galen*, on a visit to Rome, was stigmatized as a “theorist and magician.” *Sydenham* was charged with murdering his patients by repeated and plentiful blood-letting, and *Harvey*, for discovering the circulation of the blood, lost his reputation and his practice. To state that Dr. Rush met with opposition and persecution, is to place him on the roll of his great predecessors. Had he been less eminent or laborious he had suffered less.

His troubles were counterbalanced with public tokens of respect. In 1793, in testimony of his important services during the yellow fever, the board of health presented him an elegant piece of plate, with an appropriate inscription. In 1805, he was addressed to answer certain queries which the Prussian government had ordered to be made on the subject of yellow

fever; as a return he received from the king, a coronation medal. The thanks of the king of Spain in 1806, were tendered him for his answer to some queries on the subject of the same disease. In 1807, from the queen of Etruria, a tribute to his talents, he received a gold medal. During the same year he became a member of the National Institute, class of fine arts, at Paris, and the year following a member of the Society of the School of Physic there. In 1811 he received a diamond ring from the Emperor of Russia, as a compliment to his medical character. While distinguished by these honours from abroad, at home he enjoyed the respect and love of thousands.

In the temples of Æsculapius tablets were hung up recording the diseases which his skill and genius had cured. Look up—behold the tablet containing the cures of the great Philadelphia physician.

Read the testimony of a youth:

“ ’Twas in the circle of the gay I stood,  
 “ Death would have enter’d! Nature push’d him back.  
 ‘ Supported by a doctor of renown:  
 “ His point he gain’d.”\*

See next the record of the poet:

“ How late I shuddered on the brink of fate!  
 “ That *time* is mine” O Rush! “ to thee I owe;  
 “ Fain would I pay thee with *eternity*!”

Here is the gratitude of age and weakness:

“ Alive by miracle! or what is next,  
 “ Alive” by Rush! “ if I am still alive,  
 “ Who long have buried what gives life to live:  
 “ Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.”

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\* It is scarcely necessary to observe that I am quoting from the Night Thoughts of Young.

Another—but the record is too long. It is a record of nearly fifty years, and of thousands of cases; we cannot go through it. The names of many of you are there—mine is there.

Above his eminence as a physician rises his character as a christian. It is observed by Dr. Lardner that Galen has twice mentioned the name of Christ in his treatise on the pulses; but how oft is this venerable name mentioned, referred to, and magnified in the publications and lectures of Dr. Rush. Convinced of the truth of the scriptures, he endeavoured to give them circulation. His defence of the use of the bible as a school book, published at a time when infidelity was preparing to condemn it to the flames, has been of singular benefit to his country. He was one of the first movers of the Bible Society of Philadelphia, drafted its constitution, and continued a vice-president until death. Aware of the sublime beauties recorded in the bible, he made such judicious selections, and offered such ingenious and pious expositions as imparted to all his friends information and delight.

His lectures acquired riches from the mines of inspiration, which never could have been collected from any other source. It is not surprising that his touches are found so exquisitely fine, he dipped his pencil in the colours of heaven. Permit me to give you an example of his familiar and devotional habit of illustrating the scripture. In Psalm iii. 5. the prophet says, “I laid me down and slept, I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.” “I laid me down,” says our expositor, “what thousands the last night, from affliction, could not lie down;” “I slept,” “what



“ thousands have been strangers to sleep; “ I awoke,”  
 “ how many have slept to wake no more. I owe my  
 “ safety to this, ‘ thou, Lord, sustained me.’ ” I could  
 give you many interpretations of the sacred word,  
 which I have heard him give, equally affecting and  
 devout, with the specimen I have adduced. The  
 doctor had intended as an employment in life’s decline  
 to have published a work which he meant to have  
 called, if my memory be correct, “ the Medicine of  
 the Bible.” He had read, and was justly dissatisfied  
 with Dr. Richard Mead’s *Medicina Sacra*. He saw its  
 tendency to diminish respect for the sacred volume,  
 and lamented it. For his work, the doctor had made  
 considerable preparation, but his notes are too short  
 for any one but himself to have completed. He in-  
 tended to have shewn where cures were effected by  
 natural means, and where miracle must be admitted;  
 and to have demonstrated how much biblical physic  
 harmonizes with the most useful and correct ideas of  
 modern physicians. On his death-bed he expressed  
 his regret, that the work must fall. The world and  
 the church of God have to lament that the noble  
 design has failed. Equal talents and reading for such  
 a production will not easily be found. I have the hap-  
 piness to present you with a specimen of its intended  
 nature, from a letter with which the doctor honoured  
 me, dated May 5, 1804. The following is extract:

“ New matter presses upon me every day I open  
 “ the bible. In reading the book of Nehemiah, a few  
 “ days ago, I was struck with the following passage:  
 “ ‘ Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the  
 “ wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes

“ waxed not old, and their *feet swelled not.*’ Long or  
 “ distant walking always produces more or less swell-  
 “ ing in the feet. It was universal in the American  
 “ army during the revolutionary war, when new troops  
 “ were marched to the camp. Bruce tells us his feet  
 “ were not only swelled but ulcerated, in consequence  
 “ of marching over the sands of Nubia. The exemp-  
 “ tion of the Israelites from swelled feet over a moun-  
 “ tainous and often a stony wilderness was of course  
 “ as much a miracle as their clothes not waxing old.”

“ I shall trespass upon your time,” he adds, “ while  
 “ I mention one more idea that has lately been sug-  
 “ gested to me, in reading the Old Testament.

“ The sight of a brazen serpent curing a disease  
 “ brought on by the bite of a living serpent, which  
 “ the former was made to resemble, is contrary to all  
 “ the laws of association which regulate the feelings of  
 “ the human mind, as far as they relate to health and  
 “ pleasure. It ought rather to have increased the dis-  
 “ ease it was prescribed to cure. Does not this suggest  
 “ the influence of the cross upon the minds of men, to  
 “ be contrary to all the natural and habitual disposi-  
 “ tions of the human heart? what! but divine wisdom  
 “ could have made the sight of a cross produce love,  
 “ or a dead body produce life? No wonder this mira-  
 “ culous process for curing the moral disorders of our  
 “ world appeared to be *foolishness* to the wisest nation  
 “ upon the face of the earth.”

He subjoins, “ I am encouraged to proceed in my  
 “ inquiries, by recollecting a speech made to me by  
 “ the late Rev. Mr. Marshall, of this city, on his death-  
 “ bed. To a complaint I made of the unprofitable

“ issue of my public labours, he replied, ‘ Don’t be  
 “ discouraged, my dear friend, by the want of success  
 “ in your attempts to do good. Remember the Sa-  
 “ viour of the world will say to his followers at the day  
 “ of judgment, not well done thou *successful*, but thou  
 “ FAITHFUL servant, enter *thou* into the joy of thy  
 “ Lord.’ ”

Though the whole religious creed of Dr. Rush accorded not entirely with that of any christian denomination, his cardinal opinions were altogether evangelical. His dependence for life eternal was on the atonement of the Son of God. The memorials of the Saviour’s death he partook of in his chamber the day before his decease. “ The perfect morality of the gospel,” he says, in a letter to Dr. Belknap, “ rests upon a doctrine, which though often controverted, has never been refuted, I mean the vicarious life and death of the Son of God. This sublime and ineffable doctrine delivers us from the absurd hypotheses of modern philosophers concerning the foundation of moral obligation and fixes it upon the self-moving principle of Love. The miraculous conception of the Saviour of the world by a virgin is not more opposed to the ordinary course of events, nor is the doctrine of the atonement more above human reason than those moral precepts which command us to love our enemies, or to die for our friends.” It is unnecessary to tell you he uniformly lived the life of a Christian. I will add, no minister of the word of God ever found embarrassment in his approach to a sick chamber where Professor Rush was physician.

Among the virtues which characterize good men, some one, like a Pentheselea, is frequently seen more prominent than the rest. In Professor Rush, that virtue was benevolence.

It was benevolence that induced him to visit the poor gratuitously; to leave often on their table, money to procure them support, while he like the man of Ross,

“ Prescribes, attends, the med’cine makes and gives.”

Benevolence attached him to the worthy Abolition Society of this city, for improving the condition of the African race, to whose constitution his name is appended, of which, since August, 1803, he has been unanimously chosen President at every annual election, and whose funds have been increased by his bequests. It was this led him among the first of his fellow-citizens to design the African episcopal church, and promote other similar establishments in the city. Of this, the grateful Africans were sensible, who solicited leave to walk to the grave before his body, hung their pulpits in mourning, and delivered their unlettered and affectionate eulogiums to his memory. It was benevolence suggested his elegant *Dream on the Paradise of Negro Slaves*. Benevolence inspired in his mind, the ardors of a Howard, and urged him FIRST IN THE WESTERN WORLD, to the attempt to alleviate the miseries and lessen the crimes of prisons. It was this constrained him to inquire into the effects of public punishments on society, and into the consistency of the punishment of murder by death, with reason and revelation. It was benevolence dictated his ingenious plan of a peace office for the United States.

Benevolence converted into pleasure his visits to yonder superb mansion of mercy, the Pennsylvania hospital. It was this rendered the cell of the maniac the seat of his humane observation, and prepared him to offer to the world his immortal work on "the Diseases of the Mind." It was this, associated with his love of order, that during the thirty years he was physician to that excellent establishment, made him never ten minutes absent at the hour of prescribing, unless sickness obstructed. It was the spirit of benevolence prompted him to offer information to Europeans disposed to migrate to the United States. It was this led him to exhibit as a pattern to his classes the humanity of Boerhaave, who it is said in his attendance upon the poor, discovered more solicitude and punctuality than in his attendance upon his rich patients. Asked by a friend his reason for so doing, he answered, "I esteem the poor my most profitable patients, for God is their paymaster."\* It was this conducted Dr. Rush to the jail where lay confined for debt, a friend to whose family in prosperity he had long been physician. He offered him his sympathies. He did more! he introduced into his hand a body of bank notes, amounting to more than the sums he had ever obtained

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\* Dr. Rush not only attended ministers of the gospel agreeably to the beneficent habit of gentlemen of the medical profession, without reward, but he ever exempted from charges nurses and midwives. He considered them as the auxiliaries of physicians. A fact deserves to be stated which has come to my knowledge since the above address was delivered. Our deceased friend conscientiously devoted the emoluments which on a sabbath arose from his services, exclusively to benevolent purposes.



for his services. He insisted on his receiving it, and departed, content with the approbation of him, who in the judgment will say, "I was in prison, and ye came unto me!"

Where shall I close the detail!—His task is done. He has bidden us adieu. He has ascended to receive "the blessing, even life for evermore!" His sons have caught his mantle!

Gentlemen, the Graduates and Students in Medicine,  
of the University of Pennsylvania,

I respectfully beg of you, to copy your bright exemplar. Imitate his habits of punctuality, his suavity of manners, his accuracy of observation, his unwearied perseverance. He saw, with Hippocrates, a physician's embarrassments, *vita brevis—ars longa, occasio ceteris, experimentum lubricum, judicium difficile*, but he has left you an example, how much can be effected by patient labour. Read his three essays addressed to gentlemen, entitled Sermons on Temperance and Exercise. You all loved him. May you imitate him in the fear of God, and in benevolence to men! that when you die, a grateful public may bedew your memory with tears, such as have been shed at your instructor's grave.

When the melancholy intelligence arrived, that the hero and father of our country was no more, I remember to have heard an officer, as he dropt the honest tear, exclaim, "Well, I rejoice I have been a soldier under Washington." With a like sensibility, methinks I hear each of you utter, what you will often repeat, "I rejoice I have been a pupil under Rush."







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